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TEXT

TAGS: PREL, PGOV, SOCI, CJAN, IT, GM, AR, CI
SUBJECT: FALLOUT FROM PRIEBKE DISCOVERY -- WANTED
NAZI REINHARD KOPPS MAY HAVE FLED TO SOUTHERN CHILE

REF: BUENOS AIRES 3183

1. CONFIDENTIAL -- ENTIRE TEXT.

2. WE SPOKE MAY 16 TO INTERIOR MINISTRY CHIEF OF STAFF GUSTAVO VILLALOBOS ABOUT PRESS SPECULATION THAT WANTED **NAZI** FUGITIVE REINHARD KOPPS (ALIAS JUAN MAHLER) MAY HAVE FLED **ARGENTINA** TO A DESTINATION NEAR OSORNO IN SOUTHERN **CHILE**. VILLALOBOS TOLD US THAT HE HAD SEEN NO POLICE REPORT THAT CONFIRMED THAT KOPPS HAD ENTERED **CHILE**. VILLALOBOS ALSO KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL'S WHEREABOUTS BEYOND THE SPECULATION PUBLISHED IN THE PRESS.

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE: METHODS EXEMPTION 3828
NAC CRIME DISCLOSURE ACT
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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

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3. ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS ACCOUNTS, KOPPS MAY HAVE FLED TO OSORNO IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE DISCOVERY AND ARREST OF WANTED **NAZI** WAR CRIMINAL ERICH PRIEBKE.

CONFI

BOTH KOPPS AND PRIEBKE WERE REPORTEDLY LIVING IN THE ARGENTINE CITY OF BARILOCHE. PRESS REPORTS STATED THAT POLICE IN SOUTHERN **CHILE** HAVE EVIDENCE THAT KOPPS, USING THE NAME JUAN MAHLER, TRAVELED TO OSORNO AS RECENTLY AS MAY 7, BUT THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES DECLINED TO CONFIRM HIS CONTINUING PRESENCE IN CHILE. ACCORDING TO ONE STORY, A GERMAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION IN CHILE DENIED THAT KOPPS WAS INVOLVED IN THE PRIEBKE CRIMES AND STATED THAT, ALTHOUGH KOPPS HAS TRAVELED OFTEN TO OSORNO IN THE PAST FOR BUSINESS AND PLEASURE, HE WAS NOT NOW IN OSORNO.

3. VILLALOBOS SPECULATED THAT IF KOPPS HAD IN FACT FLED TO SOUTHERN CHILE ONE DESTINATION AT WHICH HE MIGHT SEEK REFUGE IS THE INFAMOUS "COLONIA DIGNIDAD," LOCATED NOT FAR FROM THE CITY OF CONCEPCION. FOUNDED BY GERMAN EXPATRIATES, COLONIA DIGNIDAD IS A PRIVATE ENCAMPMENT REPORTEDLY RUN IN THE FASHION OF A RELIGIOUS CULT. INVESTIGATIVE REPORTERS HAVE IN THE PAST SPECULATED THAT SOME CULT MEMBERS HAVE BEEN ABUSED BY THE MANAGEMENT AND HELD AGAINST THEIR WILL. COLONIA DIGNIDAD HAS ALSO BEEN ACCUSED OF OTHER NEFARIOUS ACTIVITIES SUCH AS COOPERATING WITH THE SECRET POLICE OF CHILE'S PAST MILITARY GOVERNMENT. COLONIA DIGNIDAD'S LEADER, PAUL SCHAEFER, IS CURRENTLY FIGHTING OFF A CIVIL LAW SUIT, FILED IN GERMANY BY A FORMER CULT MEMBER, THAT IF SUCCESSFUL THREATENS THE GROUP'S LEGAL STATUS TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE.

4. COMMENT: WITHOUT EXAGGERATING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A STRANGE PLACE LIKE COLONIA DIGNIDAD NOR THE INFLUENCE OF GERMANS IN SOUTHERN **CHILE**, THERE EXISTS A CERTAIN ELEMENT OF UNRECONSTRUCTED GERMAN NATIONALISM TRACING ITS ROOTS TO GERMAN COLONISTS WHO ARRIVED IN THIS COUNTRY IN THE 19TH CENTURY. NONE OF THIS DISCOUNTS, HOWEVER, THAT ELEMENTS PERSIST IN **CHILE** THAT WOULD WILLINGLY PROVIDE SUCCOR TO A FLEEING **NAZI** WAR CRIMINAL. KAMMAN

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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